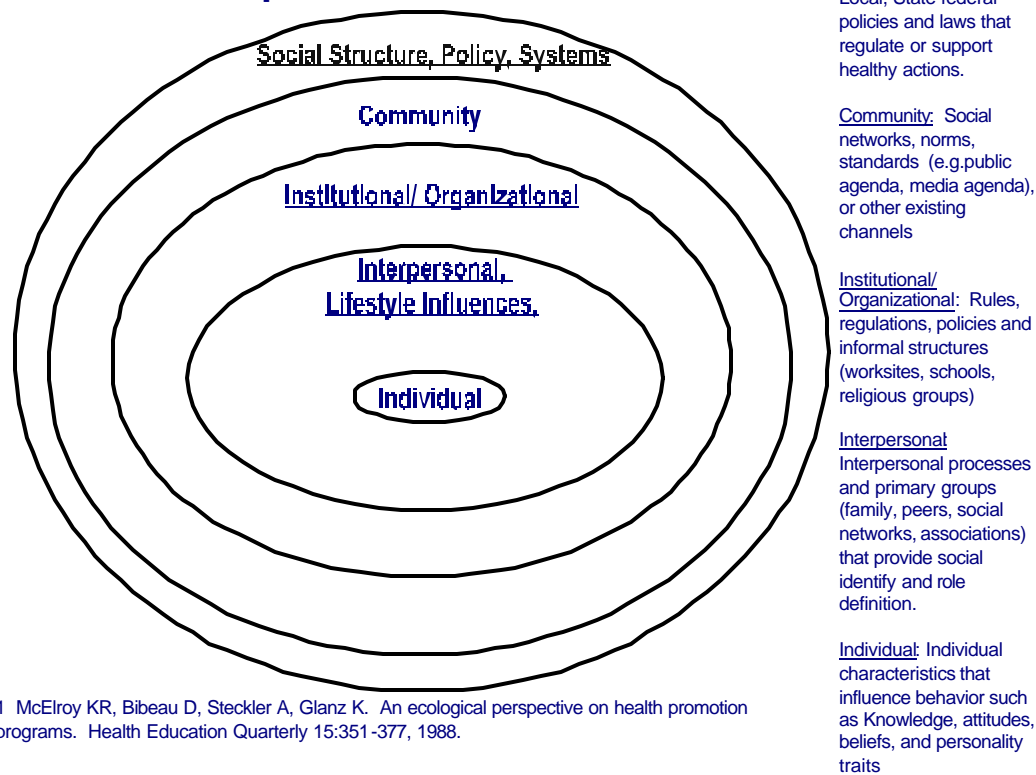


A Social-Ecological Model for Nutrition Evaluation

Spheres of Influence¹



- Social Structure, Policy, and Systems Change: In a social-ecological model, the broadest level of influence is *Social Structure, Policy, and Systems*. Influences at this level can include local, state, and federal policies and laws that regulate or support health actions and practices for disease prevention, early detection, control, and management.
- Community: The next level of influence in a social ecological model is *Community Factors*. This level includes social networks, norms, and standards, which exist formally or informally among individuals, groups, partnerships and organizations.
- Social Norms and the Community Environment. The goal of an approach to change *social norms* is to create a social milieu and legal climate in which a beneficial behavior or service is supported, encouraged or even expected as a normal part of everyday life—for a person to do otherwise becomes more difficult. Examples of activities include Advertising/social marketing, public relations, and community promotions.
- Institutional: *Institutional Factors* operate within organizations in a community, and could include businesses, schools, churches, and associations. Institutional factors include rules, regulations, policies, and informal structures that may constrain or promote recommended behaviors.
- Interpersonal: The *Interpersonal sphere* includes primary groups like peers, family, and friends that provide social identity, support, role delineation, and interaction to the individual.
- Individual: The most specific level of influence is the *Individual*. Individual influences include psychological and cognitive factors that influence behavior, such as knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and personality traits. The actual decisions made by an individual, such as food and exercise choices are also in this level of influence.